

Jours pas tranquilles à Yerevan : Keghart

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The Iskander 'Conspiracy'... a failed attempt to dismiss the Chief of the General Staff of the army... accusations of 'coup attempt'... President Sarkissian rejects Pashinyan's decision... public gathering in support of Pashinyan.

Round One: On Feb. 16, former President Serzh Sargsyan states "Iskander should have been used on the fourth or fifth day of the war, when Azerbaijan had accumulated a huge amount of manpower, military equipment in Horadiz and other parts. Iskander is for that." It is reported that the Deputy Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant-General Tiran Khachatryan had "laughed noting that this is not serious" when asked about Pashinyan's claim that the "Iskander missile had not exploded or exploded only at 10%."

Round Two: Pashinyan dismisses the Deputy Chief for mocking Pashinyan's critique of Iskander's reliability.

Round Three: Led by the chief of the general staff of the armed forces, Onik Gasparian, senior military leaders demand the resignation of Pashinyan and his government.

Round Four: Pashinyan accuses military leaders of a coup attempt and asks his supporters to attend a public gathering at Yerevan's Freedom Square. A huge number of people respond to his call and gather at the square. Pashinyan demands President Armen Sarkissian sign Pashinyan's request for the dismissal of the chief of the general staff of the armed forces, Onik Gasparian.

Round Five: On Feb. 27, President Sarkissian sends the document back to

Pashinyan without signing it and encloses his response. Pashinyan sends the document back to President Sarkissian who has three days to sign the document or submit it to the Constitutional Court for Review.

Meanwhile... The President of the Republic of Artsakh, Arayik Harutyunyan, expressed concern and called for restraint while offering his services as mediator... Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov called for calm and described the military's demand for the prime minister's resignation as Armenia's internal affair.

The Americans then got into the act. U.S. Department of State spokesman Ned Price said there has not been a determination confirming a "coup attempt" and stated : "The United States has been a steadfast supporter of the development of democratic processes and institutions in Armenia. We continue to support Armenia's democracy and its sovereignty, and we urge its leaders to resolve their differences peacefully while respecting the rule of law, Armenia's democracy, and its institutions."

Foreign minister of Sweden, Ann Linde expressed concern, stating: "The situation must be resolved without violence". She was followed by PACE co-rapporteurs who found the general staff action "unacceptable."

Then the always-brazen Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu condemned the alleged coup attempt while President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev stated: "Armenia has never been in such a bad and miserable situation. The administrators in Armenia are responsible for this situation".

Opposition protests continued in Yerevan.

An online discussion about the above developments was held with a small group of Keghart.org readers. We present selected sections for your reaction:

We all want a democratic Armenia. But something far more important than that is the security and territorial integrity of Armenia. Pashinyan must resign since he blundered even before the war, continued his suicidal policies, and has expressed no grand plan to revive Armenia. We don't even know the final version of the ceasefire document.

Re the chief of staff's protest that the PM wouldn't allow him to use Iskander missile: The military guy must have forgotten that Medzamor is a great target for

the Azeris.

I have contempt for the 15 plus 2 political parties. They are a bunch of opportunists and hooligans. They also don't have a credible candidate. I would hate to see Kocharyan/Sargsyan return to power through these corrupt politicians. I believe President Armen Sarkissian should tell the military to cool it meanwhile persuade Pashinyan to get ready to resign. He would defuse the tension if he announces the date for the early election. Pashinyan has no place in Armenian politics or in Armenia. His very presence is a reminder of our great loss and the wrong-headed policies Pashinyan pursued before, during, and after the war. He should go into exile. A Boy Scout with a Messiah complex is dangerous to have as a leader of a country.

Most contemporary political science theorists consider free elections, orderly transition of power, rule of law, presence of an independent press, separation of religious institutions from the state... as some of the basic elements of a democratic society though not necessarily in that order. None of the existing democracies fulfill all these elements, they are not perfect and not without flaws. Republic of Armenia has failed in all aspects except for very brief periods and limited to one or at most two aspects despite popular craving to establish a democratic society. Today, more than ever RoA is threatened to fail. Democracy grows through establishing traditions. Orderly transition of power is a fundamental institution on its own. At all cost, Armenia should adhere to preserve it. Imposing the will of a minority, coup d'état and storming the symbols of the state are not the way. If it succeeds, then goodbye to our dreams of democracy for the foreseeable future. The gang of 15 plus 2 has been agitating for three months now, yet the vast majority of people has stayed put. That tells something about that gang's unpopularity. It does not mean that people are all happy with the present administration and the prime minister. Probably people fear precipitating in a chain of events that could lead to chaos and civil strife. Coup d'état is not the answer if people in Armenia want to preserve whatever semblance of democracy has been left. Traditions to build democracy are crucial.

How do you explain Pashinyan's popularity among Yerevantsis? Is the perception that he is the number-one culprit for our capitulation not recognized by his supporters? Do his supporters blame others for last fall's debacle? His supporters know he is to blame but think the alternative (Kocharyan, for one) would be worse. His supporters believe punch-drunk Armenia needs stability. His supporters have always been critical of the heavy-handed military.

I have been watching the situation unfold with apprehension and spoken with

friends and family in Armenia as well. The mood and morale of everyone I know is dim. I am further disappointed in Pashinyan's call to the people to the streets, creating a potential for a civil strife. The longer these two camps create chaos the more they put our country at risk. Pashinyan carries the responsibility to create space for dialogue and why is he not doing that...?

Միակ լուծումը բոլոր կողմերու միջեւ երկօսութիւնն է, բայց այդ մէկը պիտի ըլլա՞յ, նախագահը ի պաշտօնէ այդպիսի բան մը պիտի կարենա՞յ կամ պիտի ուզէ՞ ընել: Արցախի նախագահը երեւան է եղեր եւ յայտարարեց որ պատրաստ է կողմերու միջեւ միջնորդութեան, յուսանք կը յաջողի:

Այս խառն ի խուռն ամիսներուն, երբ ամբողջ ազգը կ'ապրի հիմնականին մէջ նախկիններուն եւ Փութինեան Ռուսաստանի սարքած կամ մանրամասնօրէն ծրագրուած մեր խայտառակ պարտութեան վիշտը, ԲԱՅԱՐՁԱԿԱՊԵՍ անժամանակ կը գտնեմ 17 զիպիլ խումբին (Ազգային փրկութեան չեմ գիտեր ինչ կոմիտէի) ամբոխավարական արարքները՝ ցոյցերը, մարտական յայտարարութիւնները, գէնքի ուժով ու բռնութեամբ օրինաւոր իշխանութիւն վար առնելու ազգավնաս կոչերը: Ասիկա, կը կրկնեմ, երբեք չի նշանակեր թէ «ուշքս կ'երթայ» կամ «խենթ կ'ըլլամ» Ն.Փ.ին համար: Հաւատացած եմ որ այս ամբողջ բեմադրութեան ետեւ կը տեսնուի Կրեմլինեան ձեռագիրը: Առ այժմ ՌԴ-ի իշխանութիւնները իրենց ամբողջ կատաղութիւնը կը բանեցնեն ՀՀ-ի պէս պարտուած ու ջախջախուած ժողովուրդի մը վրայ, որպէսզի աչքը վախցնէ Պելորուսիայի պէս համեմատաբար պզտիկ երկիրներու: Ամբողջ եութեամբ դատապարտելի կը նկատեմ ՌԴ այսօրուան փութինա-լավրովեան բռնատիրութեան վարած քաղաքականութիւնը «փոքր» ազգերու հանդէպ եւ կը կարծեմ թէ բացի իր լայնատարած իշխանութիւնը պահպանելու ցանկութենէն, կը նախընտրէ իր մի քանի միլիարդներու շահերուն համար «բարեկամանալ» տասնամեակներով պատերազմի մէջ մտած իր ոխերիմ թշնամիներէն մէկուն՝ Թուրքիայի հետ:

Photo Recent gathering of 15+2 opposition at the parliament.